



Washington  
State  
Department of  
Health

**Washington State Mental Health Counselors, Marriage and  
Family Therapists, and  
Social Workers  
Advisory Committee  
Meeting Minutes**

**June 9, 2006**

**Department of Health  
Creekside Three at Center Point  
Second Floor, Room 2  
20435 72<sup>nd</sup> Ave South  
Kent, WA 98032**

**Committee Members**

Susan Bogni, Public Member, Chair; Lisa Erickson, LMHC, Vice-Chair; Carl Greenberg, MFT, Judy Roberts, LMHC

**Staff**

Bob Nicoloff, Executive Director & Geoff Hymans, AAG Advisor

**AGENDA TOPICS**

**OPEN SESSION**

**1. CALL TO ORDER –SUSAN BOGNI, PUBLIC MEMBER, CHAIR**

- 1.1 The meeting was called to order by Susan Bogni, Public Member, Chair, at 9:00 am. The Washington State Mental Health Counselors, Marriage and Family Therapists and Social Workers Advisory Committee (Committee) members approved the meeting agenda as drafted.
- 1.2 Lisa Erickson moved that the meeting minutes from January 6, 2006 be approved.

**2. REGISTERED COUNSELOR TASK FORCE-PAMELA LOVINGER, POLICY DIRECTOR**

- Governor Gregoire Directed the Department to review the registered counselors credential in response to this, the department created a Registered Counselors task force. The Task Force is required to complete their review by September 1, 2006. The recommendations will address whether the department should continue to issue registration to counselors, and if so, what educational and experience requirements there should be.

- Pamela Lovinger, Policy Manger, spoke about the Registered Counselor Task Force. Ms. Lovinger talked about the composition of the task force.
- Ms. Lovinger indicated that there are currently over 17, 000 active registered counselors and over 430 active hypnotherapists in Washington State. She acknowledged that the department doesn't have a lot of information about the individuals who hold registrations as counselors, but currently there is no supervision, or exam requirements in order to become a registered counselor.
- Ms. Lovinger shared that some registered counselor's are using the credential to obtain experience towards becoming Chemical Dependency Professionals, Mental Health Counselors, Social Workers, Marriage and Family Therapists and Psychologists.
- Bob Nicoloff, Executive Director has provided data relating to the number of registered counselor complaints. In the 2000-2001 Fiscal Year, 179 complaints were filed and disciplinary action was taken on 32 cases. In the 2004-2005 Fiscal Year 285 complaints were filed and disciplinary action was taken on 86 cases. The ratio of complaints to the number of providers is relatively low.

### **3. RECOGNITION OF BETHEL PITTMAN-SUSAN BOGNI, PUBLIC MEMBER, CHAIR**

- 3.1** Ms. Bogni presented a plaque to Ms. Pittman in appreciation of her service as a Washington State Mental Health Counselors, Marriage and Family Therapists, and Social Workers Advisory Committee

### **4. PROGRAM REPORTS-PROGRAM STAFF**

- 4.1 Program Manager Report-** The committee was provided the April 2006 Interim Operating Report. The Mental Health program's current balance is \$162,203 the Marriage and Family program's current balance is \$238, 735, the Social Work programs current balance is 370, 918.
- 4.2 Executive Director Report-**Robert Nicoloff the supervision survey responses.
- 4.3 Licensing Report-** Mr. Nicoloff distributed and discussed licensing and workload statistics for each profession. Currently, there are 2950 licensed Clinical Social Workers, 4171 licensed Mental Health Counselors, and 944licensed Marriage and Family Therapists.
- 4.4 Disciplinary Activities Reports** — Mr. Nicoloff discussed the disciplinary statistics report. There are currently twelve open Marriage and Family Therapist cases, fifty six open Mental Health Counselor cases, and twenty six open Clinical Social Worker cases. Patient boundaries are focus of many of the cases. Alleged standard of care violations are also the subject of a number of cases.

Carl Greenberg, LMFT, Committee Member, asked if there was any information available regarding the closed complaints. This was a request mentioned at the last meeting, and it is a task Ms. Kelley is undertaking as disciplinary manager. Geoff Hyman indicated that he did not remember any cases being closed since the last meeting. Ms. Kelley would not have any data at this point.

- 4.5 Committee Appointments-** Mr. Nicoloff shared that Bethel's public member position is still vacant. At this time the package is not yet complete, but it is our intent that by the next meeting we will have a new public member.

## **5. RULES-ROBERT NICOLOFF, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

- 5.1** Update on hearing for licensed counselor supervision rules- Mr. Nicoloff reported that only two attendees were present at the June 8, 2006 hearing regarding the supervision rules, and that no official testimonies were given.

Mr. Nicoloff addressed a concern from one of the attendees regarding, the term "supervision of clinical practice" listed in 246-809-134 Approved Supervisor 246-809- 234 Approved Supervisor 246-809-334 Approved Supervisor. The attendee (a near graduate student) was concerned about the term and its definition. It was a consensus among the committee that the term did not need defining, but that if in the future a term was needed, an interpretive statement would be drafted.

Geoff Hyman, AAG pointed out that in a court case the terms "clinical" and "supervision" would be defined as indicated in Webster's Dictionary.

Mr. Nicoloff presented written comments that had been received by the department regarding the rules. One recommendation was a definition of "peer" be added, the definition recommended was not agreed upon amongst the committee.

The committee discussed the recommendation and came to a consensus that an appropriate definition of peer to be should be defined as follows: "Peer" means a co-worker who is not the licensure candidate's employer or supervisor.

One suggestion Mr. Nicoloff presented was regarding 246-809-310(7), the recommendation suggested that the term one-on-one supervision be defined as one supervisor and one licensure candidate. The recommendation was reviewed and discussed.

Several questions were also discussed regarding grandfathering of supervision and the ability to obtain adequate continuing education for supervisors. The discussion indicated that the proposed WAC's indicated that supervision which was already in process was not subject to the requirements, but prior the effective date of the WAC's any new supervisor/licensure candidate experience would have to meet the requirements. While the department is not providing training

National Associations will be offering the supervisory training, it was also noted that the supervisory requirements are a one time requirement.

Mr. Nicoloff presented forms for the supervisor to complete and provide to the licensure candidate prior to the commencement of supervision. The committee approved of the forms with a few amendments. Mr. Nicoloff indicated they would be added to the website and placed in application packets once the new rules were made effective.

- 5.2 Discussion filling rules on licensed counselor curriculum-**Lisa Erickson presented information about the curriculum review. She explained that the review began several years ago with Cheryl Storm, a previous committee member, who did a great deal of research on the topic. Ms. Erickson indicated the review process was much easier with the mental health profession than with marriage and family or social work.

Ms. Erickson reported that curricula from 6 private and public colleges and universities in Washington that offer advanced degrees in mental health counseling. The Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) curriculum standards (revised in 2001) was compared with our current WAC's. Unsurprisingly, the curricula met the standards described in WAC as it appears that the curricula were established with the intent of meeting the WAC.

CACREP identifies eight core areas of study that are consistent with the courses described in WAC 246-809-221; however a couple of points stood out. First, out of the nine academic program areas that CACREP accredits, none mention the context areas reference in WAC 246-809-221(15) developmentally disabled persons, and none of the curricula reviewed offered a class in that area. Secondly, there is no reference to the content area of "aging." It was noted that graduate programs and CACREP are now recognizing the importance of training counselors to work with the mass of seniors anticipated in the decades to come.

Ms. Erickson explained the WAC 246-809-221 Behavioral sciences -- Program equivalency refers to content areas (10) Multicultural Concerns, she recommended that the title should be changed to "Multicultural Perspectives" or "Multicultural Psychology which, in wording is more consistent with the wording of the other content areas. Ms. Erickson also recommended that with the increasing emphasis on multiculturalism across all curricula, it should be a consideration changing the WAC to reflect the change. This could be accomplished by listing the topic in subsection (9) and changing the requirements to read "The cores of study must include seven content areas from the entire list in subsections (1) through (17) of this section, SIX of which must be from content areas in subsections (1) through (9) of this subsection.

Geoff Hyman explained the Advisory Committee's ability to amend/add WAC's based on the RCW's, and reviewed the Mental Health Counselors, Marriage and

Family Therapists, Licensed Independent Clinical Social Workers and Licensed Advanced Clinical Social Workers WAC's referring to educational requirements.

Philip Brown volunteered to do further research regarding national standards. It was also a recommendation that he obtain the documentations that Cheryl had used in making her recommendation.

- 5.3 Update on the Department of Health Sexual Misconduct rulemaking process-** Mr. Nicoloff reported that at this time, there have been no new drafts. A hearing is projected for August, at that time we will get a new copy of the rules. Mr. Nicoloff was hopeful that by fall we will be official and apply to all secretary professions. Mr. Nicoloff indicated that the new sexual misconduct rules with trump current counselor rules regarding sexual misconduct WAC 246-809-049/

The committee as a group had concerns regarding some of the language of the Sexual Misconduct rules, great concern was expressed regarding the term "hugging." Mr. Nicoloff expressed that this was a common concern among many professions.

## **6. LICENSED COUNSELOR BROCHURE- ROBERT NICOLOFF, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

- 6.1** Consumer Brochure Project Update – Mr. Nicoloff shared a copy of what he believed was the final approval of the content of the consumer brochure by the Department. Unfortunately, Judy Roberts indicated that this was not the final draft.

Ms. Roberts indicated that the final version reflected current changes. Ms. Roberts indicated that she had the last copy and would e-mail it to Mr. Nicoloff. Mr. Nicoloff was hopeful that the most updated copy of the brochure would be completed and ready for review and approval at the next meeting.

- 7. COMMITTEE PRIORITIES, FUTURE AGENDA BUILDING** – The Committee discussed the registered counselor task force and expressed concern that a representative of the committee was not taking part in the task force. The committee felt that it was important to provide any information that may be useful to the task force. It was a consensus that the committee would be attending various meetings of the task force and that the committee would be holding a special meeting to make recommendations for the task force. The special ½ day meeting was scheduled for July 7<sup>th</sup>.

Rules discussion including curriculum, Sexual Misconduct, and status of Supervision Rules

Updates on the Registered Counselor Task Force

Program Reports

Selection of meeting dates for 2007

8. Adjournment – The Committee meeting adjourned at 1:10 pm

Submitted by:

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Robert Nicoloff, Executive Director  
Washington State Mental Health Counselors, Marriage and Family Therapists  
and Social Worker Advisory Committee

Approved by:

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Susan Bogni, Public Member, Chair  
Washington State Mental Health Counselors, Marriage and Family Therapists  
and Social Worker Advisory Committee